

Selected General Statements by the President
and Secretary of State

In an address on September 18, 1958 to the UN General Assembly, Secretary Dulles stated that "the United States believes that the United Nations should take immediate steps to prepare for a fruitful program of international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space". He said that the ad hoc committee proposed by the United States would report on the "nature of specific projects of international cooperation in outer space which would be undertaken under United Nations auspices".

On September 17, 1959, Secretary of State Christian A. Herter stated before the General Assembly that the United States "recognizing that progress in disarmament might be slow... has urged that peaceful uses of outer space be considered as a separate step toward constructive change". He expressed the hope that the USSR would change its position concerning the composition of the United Nations committee concerned with outer space and would join in cooperative efforts in this field.

In his address of September 22, 1960 to the General Assembly, President Eisenhower mentioned the ban on military activities in the continent of Antarctica (contained in the Antarctic Treaty) and suggested that the same principle should be applied to outer space and celestial bodies. He specifically proposed agreement on the following points:

(1) Celestial bodies should not be subject to national appropriation by any claims of sovereignty.

(2) There should be no warlike activities on celestial bodies.

(3) Subject to appropriate verification, no nation should "put into orbit or station in outer space weapons of mass destruction. All launchings of spacecraft should be verified in advance by the United Nations".

(4) There should be a United Nations program of international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

-2-

In his State of the Union Message on January 30, 1961, President Kennedy said "Today this country is ahead in the science and technology of space, while the Soviet Union is ahead in the capacity to lift large vehicles into orbit. Both nations would help themselves as well as other nations by removing these endeavors from the bitter and wasteful competition of the Cold War. The United States would be willing to join with the Soviet Union and the scientists of all nations in a greater effort to make the fruits of this new knowledge available to all".

In his address of September 25, 1961 to the UN General Assembly, President Kennedy stated "As we extend the rule of law on earth, so must we also extend it to man's new domain: outer space. All of us salute the brave cosmonauts of the Soviet Union. The new horizons of outer space must not be driven by the old bitter concepts of imperialism and sovereign claims. The cold reaches of the universe must not become the new arena of an even colder war.

"To this end, we shall urge proposals extending the United Nations Charter to the limits of man's exploration in the Universe, reserving outer space for peaceful use, prohibiting weapons of mass destruction in space or on celestial bodies, and opening the mysteries and benefits of space to every nation. We shall further propose cooperative efforts between all nations in weather prediction and eventually in weather control. We shall propose, finally, a global system of communications satellites linking the whole world in telegraph and telephone and radio and television. The day need not be far away when such a system will televise the proceedings of this body to every corner of the world for the benefit of peace."

In a recent address on May 25, 1962 at the Seattle World's Fair, Secretary of State Rusk stated:

"We fervently hope that the exploration of space will not augment the dreadful perils which hang over the heads of mankind. We earnestly seek international arrangements to assure that this great venture outward from our planet benefits the human race and redounds to its credit.

-3-

"Our goals are simple and straightforward.

"First. We think that outer space should be free for use by all nations as long as the use is consistent with the principles of the United Nations Charter.

"Second. We think that the regime of law obtaining among the nations on earth must be extended and improved as it pertains to outer space.

"Third. We think that there must be devised a clear and recognized means for the identification of rights and the adjudication of disputes as between nations conducting activities in outer space. We require, for example, mechanisms to assist in the rescue of astronauts who land unexpectedly in foreign territory and for the determination of liability for injuries or damage caused by objects returning from outer space.

"Fourth. We think that useful applications of space technology, such as communication and meteorological satellites, should be available to all nations, particularly the less-developed nations, commensurate with a realistic assessment of their needs and their ability to commit resources to the use of these applications.

"Fifth. We stand for the proposition that opportunities to participate in outer space activities should be open to all nations commensurate with their ability and willingness to cooperate constructively.

"And Sixth. We have proposed, as part of our disarmament proposals now being discussed at Geneva that, under adequate inspection and control, the placing in orbit of weapons of mass destruction be prohibited.

"Our activities in outer space are consistent with these goals. Many of these principles are embodied in a resolution of the United Nations which the United States supported. They are our frame of reference in discussions now under way for cooperative outer space programs with the Soviet Union and for implementation of programs already in effect with many of our European allies, with countries in South America and Africa and the Far East.

-4-

"We hope that these principles will continue to be embodied in reliable and enduring agreements which in the future will concern all nations. The right time to subject activities in space to international law and supervision is now, before possible untoward developments occur."